

# Study Guide--Dreams from My Father Comprehensive Test

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May 2017

## NOTES:

- This study guide is meant to be interactive. There are spaces for you to make notes based on what we go over in class and about your own thoughts/ideas/strategies. You will be assigned some sections for homework and group work; other sections you may want to wait to fill in until we do so in class.
- If you use this guide and study carefully, you will be successful on the English Dreams comprehensive test.
- Part One of the exam is CLOSED BOOK.
- Part Two of the exam may be written with the GRAPHIC ORGANIZER but no other annotations or textual support are permitted.

## **PART ONE: Three sections**

**Section A:** You will be given a partially completed family tree of Barack Hussein Obama, Jr.

- a. Time: approximately 10 minutes; worth 10 points
- b. The tree will cover Obama's maternal and paternal family members from his memoir.
- c. Pay special attention to the place of birth and race of the family members.

**Section B:** You will be given 5 multiple choice questions that test your knowledge of the main ideas, themes, events, stories, and quotes in Dreams from My Father, and how OTHER SHARED READINGS relate to Dreams from My Father.

- a. Time: approximately 10 minutes; worth 15 points
- b. The 5 questions will cover Enrique's Journey, Inherit the Wind, and Dreams from My Father.
- c. Pay special attention to the themes in Dreams from My Father, the characters, and the realizations that they spark in Obama.

**Section C:** You will be given TWO KEY QUOTES and you will CHOOSE ONE and fully identify the quote and interpret it.

- a. Time: approximately 20 minutes; worth 25 points
- b. The quotes will be taken from Dreams from My Father.

## **PART TWO: COMPARISON ESSAY**

In a 4 -paragraph essay, you will compare **Barack Obama** and the MAIN CHARACTER in your Book Group Book.

- a. You will explain how BOTH of them AT FIRST STRUGGLE with their IDENTITIES
- b. You will explain how BOTH of them LATER RESOLVE their IDENTITIES.
- C. You will explain **the similar and different lessons** that the characters learn about their identity.

You will be given a graphic organizer to plan and complete your essay. Only this DOCUMENT may be used to write the essay.

A grading rubric and checklist will accompany the essay test, and they will be provided in advance of the essay in a separate document.

## REVIEW SECTIONS

**FAMILY TREE:** Review the family tree worksheet and fill in the following tables.

**MATERNAL RELATIVES:** List the members of Obama Jr.'s family on his mother's side. Identify the person by their full name and a nickname if used. Also give the place of their birth and their race or heritage.

| Relationship to Obama Jr. AND DESCRIPTIONS or IDENTIFYING PLOT DETAILS | FULL NAME | NICKNAME | PLACE OF BIRTH | RACE OR HERITAGE |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------------|------------------|
| MOTHER                                                                 |           |          |                |                  |
| GRANDMOTHER                                                            |           |          |                |                  |
| GRANDFATHER                                                            |           |          |                |                  |

**PATERNAL RELATIVES:** List the members of Obama Jr.'s family on his father's side. Identify the person by their full name and a nickname if used. Also give the place of their birth and their race or heritage.

| Relationship to Obama Jr. AND DESCRIPTIONS or IDENTIFYING PLOT DETAILS | FULL NAME | NICKNAME | PLACE OF BIRTH | RACE OR HERITAGE |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------------|------------------|
| FATHER                                                                 |           |          |                |                  |
| AUNT                                                                   |           |          |                |                  |
| GRANDFATHER                                                            |           |          |                |                  |

## Dreams from My Father: Plot Details

Define each element listed below AND give an example from Dreams from My Father that relates to the element. Make additional changes or add-ons to clarify or expand your understanding after discussion.

### 1. Climax:

Definition:

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Question: What event do you believe was the ***climax*** of Dreams from My Father?

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Discussion notes:

### 2. Conflict:

Definition:

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Question: What event do you believe was the ***main conflict in*** Dreams from My Father?

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Discussion notes:

### 3. Foreshadowing:

Definition:

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Question: What event is **foreshadowed** when Obama sees the Life magazine cover in Dreams from My Father?

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Discussion notes:

### 4. Irony:

Definition:

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Question: In Chapter 6 of Dreams from My Father, what is **ironic** about Obama's father telling his son in a letter, "[T]he important thing is that you know your people"?

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Discussion notes:

5. **Theme:**

Definition:

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Question: Which do you believe to be the themes of Dreams from My Father?

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Discussion notes:

**CUMULATIVE REVIEW AND DRAWING CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE TEXTS WITH KEY**

**QUOTES:** Identify the following significant quotes and explain how each RELATES TO A MAIN IDEA OR LESSON OF Dreams from My Father.

1. "I don't need no books to tell me how to be black."

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

New version of quote IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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Quote explanation:

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What does this reveal about speaker's identity, values, and culture?

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Why does the speaker say this quote?

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How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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2. "The individual human mind. In a child's power to master the multiplication table there is more sanctity than in all your shouted 'Amens!' 'Holy, Holies!' and 'Hosannahs!' An idea is a greater monument than a cathedral."

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_



How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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3. “What I’m trying to tell you is, your grandma’s right to be scared. She’s at least as right as Stanley is. She understands that black people have a reason to hate.”

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

New version of quote IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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Quote explanation:

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What does this reveal about speaker’s identity, values, and culture?

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Why does the speaker say this quote?

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How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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4. "Somewhere over there lives his mother. She has become a mystery, too. He was so young when she left that he can barely remember what she looks like: curly hair, eyes like chocolate. Her voice is a distant sound on the phone."

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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6. "Independent judgment—just because the other children tease the poor boy about his haircut doesn't mean that you have to do it too."

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

New version of quote IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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Quote explanation:

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What does this reveal about speaker's identity, values, and culture?

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Why does the speaker say this quote?

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How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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7. “But he couldn’t be budged, and when I whispered to him that we might leave together, he shook his head and told me it would be best if I left.”

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

New version of quote IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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Quote explanation:

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What does this reveal about speaker’s identity, values, and culture?

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Why does the speaker say this quote?

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How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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8. "She had only one ally in this, and that was the distant authority of my father."

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

New version of quote IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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Quote explanation:

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What does this reveal about speaker's identity, values, and culture?

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Why does the speaker say this quote?

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How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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9. "To be black was to be the beneficiary of a great inheritance, a special destiny, glorious burdens that only we were strong enough to bear."

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

New version of quote IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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Quote explanation:

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What does this reveal about speaker's identity, values, and culture?

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Why does the speaker say this quote?

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How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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10. "What I needed was a community, I realized, a community that cut deeper than the common despair that black friends and I shared when reading the latest crime statistics, or the high fives that I might exchange on a basketball court."

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

New version of quote IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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Quote explanation:

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What does this reveal about speaker's identity, values, and culture?

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Why does the speaker say this quote?

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How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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11. "I'd arrived at an unspoken pact with my grandparents: I could live with them and they'd leave me alone so long as I kept my trouble out of sight."

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

New version of quote IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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Quote explanation:

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What does this reveal about speaker's identity, values, and culture?

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Why does the speaker say this quote?

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How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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12. "You have me to thank for your eyebrows ... your father has these little wispy eyebrows that don't amount to much. But your brains, your character, you got from him."

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

New version of quote IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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Quote explanation:

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What does this reveal about speaker's identity, values, and culture?

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Why does the speaker say this quote?

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How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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13. “‘Barack,’ I corrected, dropping my bags on the floor.”

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context \_\_\_\_\_

New version of quote IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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Quote explanation:

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What does this reveal about speaker’s identity, values, and culture?

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Why does the speaker say this quote?

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How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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14. “““Lord, we call down the same curse on those who ask grace for this sinner -- though they be blood of my blood, and flesh of my flesh””

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context\_\_\_\_\_

How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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15. “He makes up for the vulnerability he feels inside, fueled in part by not having a parent to protect him, by putting on a tough image.”

Text \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker and context\_\_\_\_\_

How does this relate to the main idea or lesson from Dreams from My Father?

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